

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

A. Background

BLM Office: El Centro Field Office
1661 S. 4th Street El Centro, CA 92243

DOI-BLM-CA-D070-2016-0022
CACA-56486

Project Title: Ford Performance Vehicle Testing

Location: West Mesa Routes of Travel, Plaster City and Superstition Mountain Open off-highway vehicle (OHV) surveyed areas.

Description and Rationale, including any Stipulations:

Ford Performance Group has applied for a land use permit (LUP) within the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) West Mesa Routes of Travel, Plaster City and Superstition Mountain open OHV areas (see attached maps).

The applicant proposes to utilize the land in support of the 2017 Ford Raptor off-road durability test. Trained Development Engineers and a Navigator will pilot a specially equipped vehicle over the identified routes, completing up to 5 passes per day. Then a similar vehicle equipped with a number of instruments will conduct one pass over segments of the route to collect related data for later investigation.

The route will be controlled by safety spotters at each end of a given route and supplemental spotters along the route all in radio contact with the test vehicle at all times. Speeds for any evaluation are defined by what a Raptor customer would be expected to attain during normal, non-destructive use of the vehicle.

Medical response personnel will be on hand at all times to provide immediate medical care and implement the provided medical response plan if required. All support vehicles are equipped with safety response equipment including fire suppression (dry chemical and foam), tow straps and tools.

The test vehicles will be equipped with roll bars, 5-point safety harnesses, and fire suppression systems. Drivers wear full face helmets and head and neck restraints during all testing.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

This action conforms to the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan, 1980, as amended because it is specifically provided for or is clearly consistent with the Resource Management Plan (RMP) objectives and decisions as follows:

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions) and, if applicable, implementation plan decisions:

LUP Name: California Desert Conservation Area

Date Approved: 1980

Other Documents: Western Colorado (WECO) OHV Routes of Travel Designation Plan Approved: 2003

The Plaster City OHV Area and Superstition OHV Open Area are classified as Multiple-Use Class I which is an "Intensive use" class. Its purpose is to provide for concentrated use of lands and resources to meet human needs. Reasonable protection will be provided for sensitive natural and cultural values. Mitigation of impacts on resources and rehabilitation of impacted areas will occur insofar as possible.

C. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act

The action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy

Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9:

E(19): Issuance of short-term (3 years or less) rights-of-way or land use authorization for uses such as storage sites, apiary sites, and construction sites where the proposal includes rehabilitation to restore the land to its natural or original condition.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate for this action because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply (see attached).

I considered this plan conformance and NEPA compliance record and have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan(s) and that no further environmental analysis is required.

D. Signature

//Signed//_____

Thomas F. Zale
Field Manager

E. Contact

12/21/2015_____

Date

For more information, contact Victoria Hernandez, BLM Realty Specialist, at 760.337.4436 or via email at vhernandez@blm.gov.